




Memo

November 21, 2013

TO: Transportation, Water and Infrastructure Committee
Supervisor Candace Andersen, District II
Supervisor Mary N. Piepho, District III

FROM: FOR Julia R. Bueren, Public Works Director 

SUBJECT: Transportation Development Act (TDA) 2014/2015 Funding Cycle Grant Applications

Recommendation

AUTHORIZE the Public Works Director to submit, on behalf of the County, the Transportation Development Act (TDA) 2014/2015 funding cycle grant applications to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

Financial Impact

TDA funding does not require a local match. A TDA award would augment local funds so that our local dollars can be stretched further.

Background

TDA Public Utilities Code Sections 99233.3 and 99234 make funds available in the nine-county Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Region for pedestrian/bicycle purposes. MTC makes annual allocations of TDA Article 3 funds to eligible claimants after review of applications submitted by cities, counties or congestion management agencies.

The County is eligible to submit three projects, one each from West, Central, and East Contra Costa County.

Consideration is given to projects that can demonstrate one or more of the following objectives:

1. Elimination or improvement of an identified problem area (specific safety hazards such as high-traffic narrow roadways or barriers to travel) on routes that would otherwise provide relatively safe and direct bicycle or pedestrian travel.
2. Roadway improvements or construction of a continuous interconnected route to provide reasonably direct access to activity centers (employment, educational, cultural, recreational) where access did not previously exist or was hazardous.

3. Secure bicycle parking facilities, especially in high-use activity areas, at transit terminals, and at park-and-ride lots.
4. Other provisions that facilitate bicycle/transit or walk/transit trips. For example, bike racks on buses.
5. Maintenance of multiple purpose pathways that are closed to motorized traffic or for the purposes of restriping Class II bicycle lanes.
6. Funds may be used for construction and plans, specification, and estimates (PS&E) phases of work. Project level environmental, planning, and right of way phases are not eligible uses of funds.
7. Projects that enhance or encourage bicycle or pedestrian commutes.
8. Intersection safety improvements including bulbouts/curb extensions, transit stop extensions, installation of pedestrian countdown or accessible pedestrian signals, or pedestrian signal timing adjustments. Striping high-visibility crosswalks or advanced stop-back lines, where warranted.
9. Purchase and installation of pedestrian traffic control devices, such as High-intensity Activated crosswalk (HAWK) beacons, rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB), or pedestrian safety "refuge" islands, where warranted.
10. Projects that provide connection to and continuity with longer routes provided by other means or by other jurisdictions to improve regional continuity.
11. The Project may be part of a larger roadway improvement project as long as the funds are used only for the bicycle and/or pedestrian component of the larger project.
12. Bicycle Safety Education Programs.
13. Comprehensive Bicycles and Pedestrian Facilities Plan.

Recommended Project Applications

Staff recommendations considered projects throughout the County as potential applications for TDA funding. Efforts focused on projects currently identified on the Countywide Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan, Sidewalk Priority List, as well as currently underfunded projects. The following projects are recommended by staff as candidates for TDA applications based upon competitive merits, project readiness, and need for additional funding. Staff is awaiting feedback from the Countywide Bicycle Advisory Committee (CBAC) on these projects. Staff will consider project recommendations from CBAC as well as the TWIC prior to preparing the final grant applications which will be submitted in January. Two projects are recommended for West County; however, only one can be selected for a final application to MTC.

1. A. Tara Hills Pedestrian Infrastructure Project, Tara Hills (West County)

The purpose of this project is to improve pedestrian infrastructure in Tara Hills by installing twenty-two Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant curb ramps at selected intersections near Tara Hills Elementary School, North Campus Continuing Education High School and near bus stops. Curb ramps currently do not exist in this area which presents a barrier to wheel chair users. The project also includes bulb-outs to be installed at the intersection of Dolan Way and Flannery Road. Bulb-outs/curb extensions will shorten the distance to cross Flannery Road while providing a temporary refuge area for pedestrians. The project will provide pedestrian-friendly infrastructure for residents and families as well as provide ADA access and improve safety of pedestrians during school drop-off and pick-up hours.

OR

B. Giaramita Sidewalk Project, North Richmond (West County)

The purpose of this project is to improve pedestrian infrastructure on Giaramita Street by removing the existing narrow, cracked sidewalk and the adjacent parkway strip that is overgrown with weeds. These features, which give the appearance of blight, will be replaced with a standard sidewalk that meets ADA requirements and improves pedestrian access from Market Avenue to Verde Elementary School and the Wildcat Creek Trail. This project has been requested for several years by the Verde Elementary School Community and has been selected by the North Richmond Municipal Advisory Council as a high-priority project. This project would be helpful to encourage the students to walk to school on the sidewalk rather than in the street beside parked cars. If awarded, TDA funds would augment a current \$40,000 grant award for this project through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

2. Port Chicago Highway/Willow Pass Pedestrian and Bicycle Project in the vicinity of Delta De Anza Trail, Bay Point (Central County)

The project location is on Port Chicago Highway and Willow Pass Road between the intersections with Weldon Street and Lynbrook Drive. Currently, there is a gap in the sidewalk and bike lanes at the northeast corner of Port Chicago Highway and Willow Pass Road between Lynbrook Drive and Weldon Street. The project would propose to install ultimate improvements on the easterly side of the street to delineate the second northbound lane, bike lanes, and pedestrian facilities.

The project site is a core intersection for the Bay Point Community which provides connections to the Delta DeAnza Trail, Rio Vista Elementary School, Shoreline Elementary School, and Riverview Middle School. The project has been requested by the Bay Point Municipal Advisory Council. The project site is also located in a Community of Concern as identified by MTC. If awarded, TDA funds would augment a current \$440,000 grant award for this project through Regional Safe Routes to School funding.

3. **Safety Improvements at Excelsior Middle School, Byron (East County)**

The purpose of this project is to improve safety for students walking from the Camino Mobile Home Park to Excelsior Middle School. These students currently walk along the shoulder of Byron Highway adjacent to high-volume traffic with a high percentage of trucks. The area is also subject to fog advisory during many months of the year. The project includes construction of a pedestrian path that will extend two hundred feet from Hunamm Drive to Byer Road. An asphalt berm will be installed between the road shoulder and the pedestrian path to separate motorists from pedestrians. The pedestrian crossing on Byron Highway at Byer Road will also be improved to include platform or refuge island on each side of the crosswalk, as well as pedestrian actuated flashers to warn motorists that pedestrians are present. Once students reach the east side of Byron Highway at Byer Road, they can walk an additional five feet to safely arrive inside the school gate. The principal at Excelsior Middle School contacted County staff, requesting that this foot path be provided as a necessary safety improvement. The path and pedestrian crossing will not only provide a benefit to students, but to all pedestrians who want to cross Byron Highway in this vicinity.

Consequences of Negative Action

Failure to direct Public Works to submit these applications will make it more difficult to provide funding to construct these projects.

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